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ABSTRACT

This bulletin addresses the issue of improving interagency cooperation between the school and the court for the purpose of coordinating their efforts to reduce violence and vandalism within the school and the community. The experiences of Berrien County (Michigan) are used to illustrate the process of assessing, formalizing, and maintaining communication between the school and the court. The Berrien County Court-School Seminar Project was designed to foster interagency communication and to better equip educators to deal with behavior problems. The school-based Peer Group Counseling program is an innovative method for dealing with problems in the school setting. (Author/MLF)

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Technical Assistance Bulletin

Building School-Court Cooperation: The Berrien County Model

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Summary

This bulletin addresses the issue of improving interagency cooperation between the school and the court for the purpose of coordinating their efforts to reduce violence and vandalism within the school and the community. The experiences of Berrien County, Michigan, are used to illustrate the process of assessing, formalizing, and maintaining communication between the school and the court. The Berrien County Court-School Seminar Project and the school-based Peer Group Counseling Program are provided as examples of school-court cooperative efforts. The Court-School Seminar Project was designed to foster interagency communication and to better equip educators to deal with behavior problems. The Peer Group Counseling program is an innovative method for dealing with problems in the school setting.

The Problem

As a response to the increasing rate of violence and vandalism in the schools, the Safe Schools study report to Congress recommended that "schools and school systems in which crime is a problem should coordinate their efforts with those of local courts."/1 Since "most offenses are committed by current students"/2 (juveniles), this recommendation has particular applicability to juvenile courts.

However, the relationship between the school and the court is often characterized more by hostility and isolation than by common purpose. The severe communication problems which exist between the school and the court were highlighted when school administrators across the country were asked about the amount of support they received from the courts. "When it comes to the local courts, the principals' vote is 'no confidence'. Only 16 percent said that the courts provided very much support."/3

Within this context of rising crime problems within the schools--which require coordinated efforts from hostile agencies--the improvement of communication between the school and the court has been identified as a priority issue.

Ways in which poor communication between the school and the court can be improved and coordinated efforts implemented may be demonstrated by the experiences of Berrien County, Michigan. Located in the southwestern corner of the state along the shores of Lake Michigan, Berrien County borders Indiana and is part of the metropolis of Chicago. Its population of 170,000

/1 National Institute of Education, Violent Schools--Safe Schools (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1978), p. 14.

/2 National Institute of Education, op. cit., p. iii.

/3 National Institute of Education, op. cit., p. 148.

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residents is not unlike most midwestern counties: semi-rural with clusters of towns and cities. St. Joseph, the county seat and Benton Harbor, its "twin city," are its major cities.

In a 1971 survey report from the John Howard Association, a private, nonprofit firm, several problems in Berrien County were identified within the juvenile justice system and the community. Among them were: (1) a significantly high juvenile arrest rate, (2) a rate of detention which was four times that of recognized standards, (3) a large number of juveniles being detained in the county jail, and (4) a rate of commitments to institutions and other facilities which exceeded recognized standards. A major contributing factor to these problems was the lack of alternatives both in the community and within the juvenile justice system. As a result of the survey, Berrien County developed a plan for upgrading juvenile justice services. Group home services began operations in 1972, and a Citizens Advisory Council to the court was formed. (The Citizens Advisory Council was to play a major role in future developments.) In 1973 a youth service bureau was started, and a private shelter opened its doors; and, in 1974, a new residential treatment and detention center opened with emphasis on diversion of status offense cases (runaway, truant, and incorrigible).

Although specific recommendations had also been made regarding upgrading of community services and community involvement, the court gave its full attention only to developing court-related programs.

Then, on April 5, 1974, the Niles "Daily Star," a Berrien County newspaper, carried the headline, "Absenteeism Concerns Board." The article began: "The Board of Public Safety moved Thursday to request the City Council to bring the problem of absenteeism and related problems of junior high school students to the attention of the juvenile division of the Berrien County Circuit Court."/4 This action was precipitated by a local school principal, Al Cater, who appeared before the board to express his concerns over the growing rate of absenteeism and drug problems within the schools. Mr. Cater indicated more assistance was needed from the court, and he stated that a juvenile officer had not been to his school all year. A letter was sent to the presiding judge, on behalf of the board, soliciting the court's cooperation in calling these problems to the attention of the director of court services.

It was in this manner--through the news media and a call from the presiding judge--that the director of court services, Charles Kehoe, was advised that a local school administrator felt that the court was not offering sufficient support to the schools in dealing with mutual problems. Mr. Kehoe contacted the principal and voiced his concerns about the lack of communication between the court and the school. This initial contact resulted mainly in 'clearing the air," but it also marked the beginning of a cooperative effort to improve court-school relations.

The Solution

A new emphasis was placed on the need for better communication between the court and the outside agencies, particularly the schools. The focus for the court was no longer solely on in-house problems and programs. With assistance from the schools, the Berrien County Juvenile Court began to develop policies, procedures, and programs that emphasized cooperative court-school efforts in dealing with delinquent and predelinquent youth.

The process for solving the problem of poor communication between the school and the court in Berrien County included--

- Determining the nature of the problem
- Formalizing methods for interagency communications
- Developing interagency programs.

Each of these processes will be discussed in the following sections.

Determining the Nature of the Problem

In order to determine the extent of the lack of communication with schools and the resulting problems, the court requested its Citizens Advisory Council to conduct a survey of Berrien County Schools. This survey explored: (1) the definition and scope

/4 "Absenteeism Concerns Board," The Daily Star, Niles, Michigan, April 5, 1974.

of truancy and behavior problems, (2) the policy and procedures for dealing with these problems, (3) the knowledge and availability of alternative programs, and (4) the satisfaction with results from referrals to outside agencies, such as the court.

The results indicated varying definitions of truancy and behavior problems and varying methods for dealing with these problems within the schools. Schools were not aware of alternatives for working with problem students. Schools neither depended on court services nor saw them as meeting the needs of students. In fact, the courts were seen as part of the problem rather than as part of the solution.

The lack of communication between the school and the court proved to be the major factor in the schools' negative responses to the court. In an attempt to remedy this lack, representatives from the school and the court began a series of meetings in the fall of 1974.

Formalizing Methods for Interagency Communication

Under the leadership of Charles Kehoe, director of court services, a number of interagency meetings were organized. Although the initial meetings of representatives from the school and the court were described as "shouting matches" and "blaming sessions," several interagency issues were identified. These issues focused on truancy, confidentiality of court records, and a need for liaison between the school and the court.

Two committees were formed to address the issues. One committee worked to develop a policy on release of court records to the school. The court agreed to accept the committee's recommendation to release the names of students on formal probation to the schools, although the release of the names of students on informal probation was left to the judgment of the probation officer. Another committee addressed the problem of truancy and developed guidelines and procedures relative to dealing with truancy problems from the level of the schools to the referral to the court.

In further response to the need for liaison between the school and the court, Mr. Kehoe sent a letter to the principal of every school in Berrien County requesting that one person be designated in each school for the court personnel to contact when they visited the school. The response was 100 percent. Now, every year, the Berrien County Juvenile Court publishes a Directory of Court-School Liaison Workers and Juvenile Court Staff that is distributed to court and school personnel. Further, policies and procedures have been developed specific to the court's relationship to the schools which include: (1) making court staff available to the schools for case conferences prior to the actual filing of a petition, (2) advising the school when a child is being removed from the school because of a court decision, and (3) requiring pre-enrollment meetings between the school, foster parents, and court staff relative to the enrollment of a student who has been recently placed in foster care by the court.

Developing Interagency Problems

Since methods for interagency communciation have been formalized between the school and the court, two interagency programs have been developed. Following are descriptions of these two programs.

- Court-School Seminar Project

  The Court-School Seminar Project was a 2-year multidisciplinary inservice training effort which aimed to foster communication between the school and the court and to better equip schools to deal with discipline problems. In October 1976, a group of educators, social service personnel, and the police together with the court formed the Court-School Seminar Committee. The committee secured funds from the Juvenile Service Training Council and designed a series of eight 1-day seminars. The funding for this project not only covered the seminars, but also evaluation of the project and a videotape of the training sessions for future use by participants in developing their own inservice training programs. Fifty people, the majority of whom were educators, attended the series of eight seminars in each of the 2 years of the project. The news media were invited to attend each seminar so the public would be informed. The following topics were covered:

- Communications building
- The juvenile justice process
- Scholastic performance and juvenile delinquency
- Juvenile services in Berrien County
- Community and educational responsiveness to children in trouble
- Strategies for working with problem youth
- Juvenile delinquency implications for the educational system
- Evaluation of the eight seminars.

The contents of the seminars were geared to improve communication between the school and the court and to offer suggestions to educators in dealing with problem youth.

The videotape was prepared by Whirlpool Corporation, but after consultation with representatives from the corporation, it was decided that participants would benefit more from a videotape of a series of brief vignettes showing negative and positive alternatives to dealing with behavior problems in a school setting, rather than a videotape of all eight training seminars. These vignettes covered the proper procedure for searching a locker, understanding the juvenile court system, and means for improving interagency communication. After the first seminar, Michigan State University agreed to give four credit hours to the participants of the program.

The Court-School Seminar Project ended in June 1978. However, the response had been so positive that a consortium of schools which included Michigan State University, incorporated the concept into their college curriculum. It should be noted that apparently there have been some problems with this transition, and there are concerns that the courses may now be too academic. The comment of one participant exemplifies this concern: "The seminar project has been turned into a graduate course. The benefit of the project was to know people on a first name basis--to communicate. The whole project has disintegrated and we're almost back to the same place we started--people not releasing information."

Peer Group Counseling Program

This program, which is an example of a cooperative effort to deal with the problems of delinquent youth, was suggested by Charles Kehoe, director of court services, in response to the school's need to develop innovative methods of dealing with problems in the schools. Peer group counseling programs originated in Rock Island, Illinois, during a period in which there were severe race riots which polarized that community, and in which it took 22 days for State police to get the schools under control. One month after peer group counseling was begun the problems were over.

Berrien County educators visited the program in Rock Island, Illinois, after which the court and the school joined in a cooperative effort to implement a Peer Group Counseling Program in the Berrien County schools. The court personnel submitted a grant for the program, essentially sponsoring the school. A private organization, Peer Culture Development, Inc., received a contract under this grant to provide the direct service component of the program, and a 2-year project was initiated on a demonstration basis at two schools in Niles, Michigan, and two schools in Benton Harbor, Michigan. The four group leaders hired for the program were to train school personnel so that the program could be continued after completion of the grant. Although one school program closed down during the project, another school arranged

for the group leader to continue in the school after the grant was completed. Several other schools have since incorporated this program into their schools.

In Berrien County, Peer Group Counseling is a voluntary program that meets daily, stresses confidentiality, and makes use of the influence of the natural leaders of the school community, on their peers. The program also stresses peer caring and helpfulness, with self-help as a necessary ingredient.

Normally each group consists of a group leader (one of the Peer Group Counseling Program staff) and 10 to 12 students. Although most students in the groups attend meetings full-time, others attend on a part-time basis, often to deal with a specific problem. Students can be recommended for group participation by school officials, Peer Group Counseling Program staff, parents, teachers, or any number of community agencies. Many of the students are self-referrals.

Ideally, the group process engenders among its members a "culture of caring." Students begin to genuinely care about each other and the general environment in their school. This attitude enables the group to defuse potential trouble and provide constructive help for each of the other group members as problems arise.

Results

The Berrien County experience has shown that if schools and courts communicate and cooperate, both can be more responsive to the needs of problem students. Furthermore, when the school and the court begin to communicate, they encourage each other to develop the services and programs needed to deal with problem students. The results of the Berrien County programs on the control and prevention of delinquency were evaluated as follows:

- Court-School Seminar Project

The Court-School Seminar Project has had an impact on prevention rather than control of delinquent acts. The interagency communication and the greater knowledge of alternative methods for dealing with problem students has increased the alternatives the school can utilize or develop in dealing with problem situations before they reach a point of crisis.

Four Methods of evaluation were used:

(1) An independent evaluation of the program indicated that the project has accomplished its goals as described in the grant application, which were to--

- Provide better services to behavior-problem youth in the schools
- Expand participants' awareness of the causes, prevention, and treatment of juvenile delinquency
- Provide participants with alternative means of working with behavior-problem youth
- Improve the channels of communication and spirit of cooperation between educators, social service, and law enforcement personnel.

(2) Pretest and post-test reflected a gain in information learned and retained.

(3) The participant evaluations after each seminar rated the majority of the seminars as above average to excellent. (Appendix B contains a summary of the content of the 1977-78 seminars.)

(4) The Court-School Seminar Committee itself was considered as an instrument in the

evaluation process. Both in terms of their direct observation of the sessions and the conclusions drawn from participants' evaluation forms, the Committee determined that all indicators pointed to the fact that participants considered the seminars worthwhile and were able to apply the information to their regular duties.

- Peer Group Counseling Program

The Peer Group Counseling Program has had a direct impact on the reduction of problems within the school. The self-reported and official data indicated the following for the full-time participants in the program:

- A decrease of 39 percent in disciplinary violations
- A decrease of 65 percent in delinquent acts
- A reduction of 32 percent in truancy
- A decrease of 50 percent in the usage of hard drugs
- A decrease of 42 percent in the use of liquor.

These decreases were for the 1976-77 school year as compared to 1975-76.

Replication Issues

It is doubtful that Berrien County, Michigan, is unique in that its juvenile court focused more on the improvement of its own services and programs than on its relationship with the schools. However, Berrien County's response to the lack of communication was unique in its proactive rather than reactive approach. Rather than dealing with the issue of one principal's concern for additional support from the court on a one-issue basis, the whole spectrum of issues was investigated, assessed, and acted upon. Berrien County's coordinated committee meetings, which generated policies and procedures and planned interagency programs, may be replicated wherever there is an interest and a commitment to planned change. It must be emphasized that the identification of one person for the leadership role is essential.

The two interagency programs that were developed are well documented. The directors of these programs will provide information that will allow for their replication by anyone who may be interested in initiating either program. This is underscored by the fact that the Berrien County Peer Group Counseling Program is modeled after the program in Rock Island, Illinois. Further, the 1977-78 Final Report of the Berrien County Court-School Seminar Project contains a model for future court-school seminar projects. This model is contained in Appendix A. It should be kept in mind that the transition of this program to the college curriculum has had a detrimental effect on the success of this program. Consequently, one of the recommendations from the independent evaluation of this project seems most applicable--"regarding future activities for participants ... quarterly or semi-annual update meetings should be established for the purpose of further improving communication channels."

Required Resources

An initial assessment of problems within the schools and lack of interagency communication can be accomplished by many means; however, the utilization of a citizens advisory council appears to be the least costly.

The two interagency programs that were a result of the increased interagency cooperation in Berrien County and required more extensive and expensive resources, as indicated below.

- Court-School Seminar Project

The total cost of the 2-year Court-School Seminar Project was approximately $15,700 which was distributed as follows:

- Hiring consultants and evaluation costs--59 percent
- Participants' lunches and coffee breaks--28 percent
- Operating costs--13 percent.

The time spent on the project by the project director, school and court personnel, and auxiliary staff was done at County expense. Thus, the operating costs only reflect the actual cost of materials.

- Peer Group Counseling Program

  The Peer Group Counseling program was funded by the Michigan Office of Criminal Justice (LEAA) for $101,500 the first year. This cost covered the following:

  - Four full-time group leaders
  - Travel for the executive director to monitor the program
  - Research ($3,000 was allotted to evaluation).

Attachments

Attachment A - A Suggested Model for Future Court-School Seminar Projects

Attachment B - 1977-78 Seminars in Review

Attachments A and B are documents which were included in the 1977-78 Final Report of the Berrien County Court-School Seminar Project.

Contact Persons

For answers to more specific questions about the Berrien County experience or on either interagency program, call or write--

Charles J. Kehoe
Director of Court Services
Berrien County Juvenile Court
Courthouse
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085
(616) 983-7111

For answers to more specific questions about the Peer Group Counseling Program, call or write--

Don Jones
Executive Director
Peer Culture Development, Inc.
2100 - 18th Avenue
Rock Island, Illinois 61201
(309) 794-0334

For response from participants in the Peer Group Counseling program and the Court-School Seminar Project, call or write--

Al Cater, Principal,
or
Roger Hargraves, Assistant Principal
Ring Lardner Junior High School
Niles Community School
Niles, Michigan 49128
(616) 683-6610

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Kehoe, Charles J., and Joyner, Kathleen. Berrien County Court-School Seminar Project: 1977-78 Final Report. Berrien County, Michigan: August 1978.

The National Institute of Education. Violent Schools-Safe Schools. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, January 1978.

Roth, Robert. Berrien County Schools Survey Conducted by the Berrien County Juvenile Court Citizen Advisory Council. (draft copy)

Videotape

Berrien County Juvenile Court. A Case for Cooperation. Whirlpool Corporation. (45 minutes)

For further information on this program, or to request direct technical assistance in implementing a similar program, contact the National Center or the Regional Center nearest you. NSRN technical assistance is available at no cost to requestors.

The morning session was moderated by Pat Moody from Radio Station WSJM, and the afternoon session was moderated by Leo Isaac from Radio Station WHFB.

Two vignettes from the Court-School video tapes were shown.

Seminar V

Topic: Community and Educational Responsiveness to Children in Trouble

Trainers: Dr. Conrad Powell and Dr. Larry Winecoff of the University of South Carolina

Place: Holiday Inn, St. Joseph, Michigan

Date: February 8, 1978

Their discussion emphasized ways and means of changing delinquent behavior through collaborative efforts among schools, agencies and systematic planning.

Role playing and audio visual aids were utilized.

Seminar VI

Topic: Strategies for Working with Problematic Youth

Trainers: Dr. Ken Burnley, Director of Title X Programs, Ypsilanti Public Schools in Ann Arbor, Michigan
Dr. Paul Helber, Special Education Supervisor for Washtenaw County Intermediate Schools

Place: Berrien Hills Country Club, Benton Harbor, Mich.

Date: March 8, 1978

The trainers presented alternatives to participants in helping them to better understand problematic youth and gaining their positive involvement in the school program.

Great emphasis was placed on political support for needed programs and services. Two movies were shown to illustrate their presentation.

Seminar VII

Topic: Juvenile Delinquency Implications for the Educational System

Trainers: Dr. Maxie Jackson, Director, Center for Urban Affairs, Michigan State University
Dr. George Logan, Professor of Urban Development, Michigan State University
Paul Bader, Program Manager, Education Employment Service, Department of Social Services
Delbert Gray, Executive Director, Neighborhood Education Authority, Lansing, Michigan

Place: Holiday Inn, Benton Harbor, Michigan

Date: April 12, 1978

The trainers, Dr. Jackson and Dr. Logan, provided participants with information regarding the continued emphasis on community-based programs for delinquent youth and the direct impact they have on the educational system.

Mr. Bader and Mr. Gray were additional resource people who assisted in the training for the afternoon session, providing participants with an understanding of the need for these programs and how they relate to the schools. Simulation activities were used throughout this session.

Seminar VIII

Topic: Evaluation

Trainer: Walter J. Hammer, Division/Staff Training Support Manager, General Motors Corporation

Place: Win Schulers, Stevensville, Michigan

Date: May 10, 1978

The wrap up session was conducted by Walter Hammer to demonstrate some exercises for group interaction and to foster communication. Mr. Hammer's main objective was to determine if participants' expectations, which they submitted in the first session, were met. It was the general concensus that most of their expectations were met. The final session was very productive, bringing the seminars to a close.

At the end of the day, the post-test was administered and certificates were awarded to each participant by the Honorable Ronald H. Lange, Judge of Probate and Juvenile Court.

Attachment A

A SUGGESTED MODEL FOR FUTURE COURT-SCHOOL SEMINAR PROJECTS

BERRIEN COUNTY

COURT-SCHOOL SEMINAR PROJECT

Report Prepared By:

Charles J. Kehoe
Director of Court Services

Kathleen Joyner
Deputy Director of Court Services

August 1978

III. A SUGGESTED MODEL FOR FUTURE COURT-SCHOOL SEMINAR PROJECTS

There is really nothing unique or special about the Berrien County Court-School Seminar Project. It can be easily duplicated in any community and yet tailored to the individual needs of a particular community. It requires time, workers, patience and a commitment to better cooperation among various groups and agencies. As can be seen from this report, the benefits can be immediate and hopefully, long lasting.

What follows are suggestions for the development of future Court-School seminars. These recommendations are broadly written to allow for flexibility. For more specific details the reader may wish to contact the project staff at the Berrien County Juvenile Court.

1. Needs Assessment

Before any training is considered, those who may be participants should be involved in determining the need for training and identifying problems which should be resolved. The needs assessment can be accomplished by using a citizens advisory council to the court to conduct a survey of multi-agency training needs and current levels of cooperation.

2. Seminar Committee

Once the need has been determined and problems needing answers identified, a committee should be appointed by the Court or the sponsoring body. The committee members should represent each of the various disciplines which will participate in the training. While the committee members should be individuals who have the respect of their colleagues and a good understanding of the needs of their particular area, they need not necessarily be the people who always agree with the sponsoring agency.

In addition, a member of the faculty from a local college or university should serve as the liaison between the committee and the college or university. This would enhance the possibility of gaining college or graduate credits for the program.

The committee should meet monthly, at least, during the development of the project.

The sponsoring agency should be responsible for providing the staff for the project. This would involve doing the "leg work" for the committee as well as making arrangements for typing of the grant application and all arrangements for contacting consultants, and setting up each meeting.

Committee members can be given small, short-term assignments, but project staff should do the majority of the tasks.

3. Identify Funding Source

In communities where monies for training programs are not sent to a single agency, such as the Juvenile Service Training Council, sources of Federal Criminal and Juvenile Justice funds should be contacted. If this does not appear to be a possible source of funds, the committee can explore the possibility of other government monies which may be available on a state or local level.

If government funds are not available, private funding sources such as business, industry or private foundations should be contacted. Directories of private foundations can be found in most public libraries.

4. Preparing the Grant Application

This may well be the most important step in the development of a seminar project. The grant application is the foundation of the program, and the document which will lead the funding source to make a final decision on a request for funds.

Every funding source will require certain basic information. Beyond the basic information, specific requirements may be requested, depending on the source of funds.

In general, the grant application should state:

the need for the program (use the data gathered in Paragraph #1 "Determining the Need")

. project goals - what you want to accomplish

- measureable objectives
- who will be trained
- topics to be covered
- a proposed time table
- a detailed budget
- a list of the consultants who will do the training
- a brief description of the sponsoring agency

When considering consultants for the project, the committee should search for the best qualified consultants. This can be accomplished by checking with state and national organizations that may know of professionals who can address specific topics.

Not all "experts", however, can conduct a training seminar. The ability to keep a group's interest for an entire day and involve participants in the training are specific skills. One of the major purposes of the project is to stimulate discussion and new ideas and carefully selected consultants can help the project accomplish that purpose.

The committee may also wish to consider the use of more than one consultant for a particular seminar. A "two-person" training team can often do more with the participants if simulation techniques or role playing exercises will be used.

Consultants should be contacted before the grant application is submitted, to discuss their participation in the program and possible dates for their presentation. This will avoid problems after the grant application is approved.

Panel discussions are especially productive when discussing local services. During these seminars, a neutral person from the community can be asked to serve as the moderator for the panel. News media personalities are excellent resources for this task.

The detailed budget should be carefully prepared. Even the smallest detail should be considered (postage, telephone, office supplies and printing costs, etc.).

Generally, consultants will receive a fee for their presentation plus a fee to cover their preparation and/or travel time. In addition, a consultant's expenses (meals and lodging) and travel costs are budgeted separately.

Unless there is some unusual reason, equipment should not be purchased, but rented on an as needed basis.

The sponsoring agency may wish to be financially reimbursed for the time project staff spend on the program. Not all funding sources approve this, thus it should be checked into before it is included in the budget.

The important issue in preparing the budget is to keep participants' costs to a minimum. If at all possible, the grant should cover all of the participants' expenses except salary and mileage, of course.

The grant application should be reviewed by the committee before it is submitted to the funding source.

5. Beginning the Project

When the grant application has been approved, the task of starting the project actually begins. Three basic areas need to be attended to and they are (1) participants; (2) consultants; and (3) sites.

The first priority is the process of selecting participants. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways depending on the community that is the focus of the seminars. Once participants are selected and invited, letters from their supervisors should be requested stating that the participant will be given the necessary time to attend each seminar.

All seminar dates should be confirmed prior to the first seminar. Participants should receive a program detailing the seminar dates and sites, consultants and topics to be covered, and starting and finishing time for the program. They should also know what materials they should bring, if any, and in general terms, what to wear.

If college credit is to be offered for the seminars, participants should know this too, in advance so they will be able to register at the first meeting.

Immediately following the approval of the grant application, letters should be sent to the consultants confirming their training dates, topics and arrangements for travel and lodging. Copies of the contract for services should be sent for signing, as well as a copy of the grant application which will give the consultant an overall picture of the project and clarify where they "fit in".

Consultants should also submit a list of any audio-visual equipment needed and hand-outs that will need to be duplicated.

It is best if all of the consultants can be "signed up" and fully informed before the first seminar begins.

Meeting sites should also be confirmed before seminar number one. This is where the committee can be especially helpful. A site committee should visit every site prior to agreeing to hold a meeting there. Adequate space for the number of participants, pleasant surroundings, quality of meals, sufficient ventilation in the meeting room, rooms that are free from outside noise and distraction should be sought. Sites that can offer audio-visual equipment will save project staff extra work.

Once meeting sites are decided, they should be confirmed with the management of the site by letter stating all the particulars.

If a pre-test/post-test is to be used, the consultants should submit their questions and answers to the project staff in sufficient time to have the test typed and ready for the first seminar.

6. Seminar Maintenance

When the seminars begin, the major task of the project staff and the committee is to maintain the program and stay on top of problems.

Needless to say, project staff and committee members should attend each meeting. In this way, problems can be addressed immediately and feedback from participants can be received. Each meeting will have its own details that

need attention. Generally, however, meetings will have the same basic requirements and routine. An easel with news print or a chalk board should be available, smokers and non-smokers should be seated separately and coffee and tea should be available at the time participants begin to arrive. There should be one coffee break in the morning and a soft drink break in the afternoon. Lunch breaks should not exceed 60 minutes.

At the first seminar, participants should be asked to put in writing their own expectations for the seminar. These can then be summarized or totaled and distributed to all the consultants prior to their seminar. This approach gives the consultants an awareness of what it is the participants want out of the seminars. The "expectations list" can also be used at the end of the seminars to see if the participants' expectations were achieved.

Each seminar should be evaluated at the close of the session. Particular attention should be paid to participants' written comments as they often identify problems which can be corrected before the next session. The evaluations should be collected and summarized by project staff and reviewed by the entire committee prior to the next seminar. Special concerns of the participants may be shared with the consultants before they begin their seminar. A briefing helps consultants to know what has gone on before their seminar and what they can expect.

7. Ending the Seminars

During the mid-point of the project, consideration should be given to the project's future. If plans are to continue the program for another year, this would be the time to begin that planning.

The evaluation of the program by an outside, independent evaluator is critical in determining the problems of the project and future needs. Having the evaluator at the first and last seminar will enable the person to visually grasp the growth and progress of the group. This also serves to tie the program together.

At the last seminar, certificates can be given to participants for successfully completing the program. This small token may mean a great deal to some participants and is a symbol of the cooperative spirit of the project.

If a final report is written, participants should receive a copy to fully inform them of the success of the program. It will also serve to recruit participants for future programs.

8. News Media Involvement

Court, social service and educational personnel are not known for their skills in working with the news media. However, public information is an important part of such a program and needs to be considered a priority.

News releases should be sent to all the news media in the geographical area served by the seminars. The releases should be sent prior to each seminar and should identify the consultant and topic for the day. The media should also be invited to attend the seminars for the possibility of developing future feature stories.

9. Special Guests

The involvement of special guests throughout the seminars will also enhance the program's success. Community leaders, staff from the funding source, faculty from local universities and professionals from outside communities should be invited on a seminar by seminar basis to come and observe the program. The addition of one or two guests at each program will not inflate the program costs, but broaden the awareness of the program.

10. Summary

Putting together a Court-School Seminar Project can be an enriching and rewarding experience to project staff, committee members and participants.

A brief follow-up study six months after the last seminar should find that participants have applied much of what they have learned and that there has been an improvement in communications among agencies

There is no question that putting such a project together means hard work, but the results will show that it is time well spent.

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FOOTNOTES

1. National Institute of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Violent Schools - Safe Schools: The Safe School Study Report to the Congress, Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977). p.148

2. Children's Defense Fund, Children Out of School In America, (Washington, D.C.: Washington Research Project, Inc., 1974). p.148

3. This, Leslie E., The Small Meeting Planner, (Houston, Texas, Gulf Publishing Company, 1972). p. 22

4. Ibid p. 199

5. Ibid p. 181

6. National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Report of the Task Force on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977). p. 119-120

7. National Assessment of Juvenile Corrections, Brought to Justice? Juveniles, the Courts, and the Law, (Ann Arbor, Mich.: The University of Michigan, 1976). p. 89

8. Ibid p. 90

Attachment B

1977-78 SEMINARS IN REVIEW

BERRIEN COUNTY

COURT-SCHOOL SEMINAR PROJECT

Report Prepared By:

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August 1978

D. 1977-1978 Seminars in Review

Seminar I

Topic: Introduction & Communications Building

Trainer: Walter J. Hammer, Division/Staff Training Support Manager, General Motors Corporation

Place: Win Schulers, Stevensville, Michigan

Date: October 12, 1977

Mr. Hammer set the tone of the seminar in its entirety. He introduced the project outline to be covered for each session and allowed for participant interaction. He requested that each participant submit an expectations list to find out what they wished to gain from each session. Various simulation activities were utilized for better communications and to help participants better understand problematic youth.

Seminar II

Topic: The Juvenile Justice Process: Putting the Pieces Together

Trainer: Milton J. Robinson, Chairman of the Michigan Youth Parole and Review Board and Panel Members:
Hon. Donald J. Dick, Judge of Probate
John Smietanka, Berrien County Prosecuting Attorney
Andrew Rodez, Benton Harbor Chief of Police
Stan White, Defense Attorney, Law Offices of Bleich, Peterson and Jancha, St. Joseph, Michigan

Place: Whirlpool Education Center, Benton Harbor, Michigan

Date: November 9, 1977

Mr. Robinson provided participants with an overview of the juvenile justice system in Berrien County for the morning session.

The afternoon session featured a panel composed of a Probate Judge, a Prosecuting Attorney, Defense Attorney and Police Officer. The panel defined and discussed their various roles.

Seminar III

Topic: Scholastic Performance and Juvenile Delinquency

Trainer: Dr. Martin Gold, Program Director, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Place: Cook Nuclear Center, Bridgman, Michigan

Date: December 14, 1977

Dr. Gold's presentation correlated the relationship between the scholastic performance and juvenile delinquency. He suggested many alternatives of working with problematic youth in a school setting. Based on recent research, Dr. Gold gave factual information concerning some myths which are held about delinquency.

Seminar IV

Topic: Juvenile Services in Berrien County

Trainers: A panel of agency representatives

Place: Berrien Springs, Michigan

Date: January 11, 1978

A panel of agency representatives focused on local services available to children and youth in Berrien County and how participants can make use of these services. Panelists for the morning session included: Dick Freer, Director of Link, Inc.; Bud Schuler, Counselor, Youth Service Bureau; Robert Tollaksen, Director of Consultation and Education, Riverwood Mental Health Clinic; Jack DeLong, Director of Drug Treatment.

Panelists for the afternoon session included: Maureen McRae, Child Welfare Supervisor, Department of Social Services, Tim Fenderbosch, Protective Services Supervisor, Department of Social Services; Robert Roth, Director of Probation Services, Juvenile Court.

The facilitators discussed proper procedures to follow when making referrals, availability of services and ways of preventing delinquency.